

**Sister Blanche Kinzer**  
**Second Provincial Superior 1929 - 1935**  
**1886 – 1970**

Elizabeth Kinzer was born February 28, 1886 in Cold Springs, Minnesota, Diocese of St. Cloud. Her family later moved to Uniontown, Washington where she attended St. Boniface School and was taught by the Salvatorian Sisters who had recently arrived. In 1901, Elizabeth Kinzer, Katherine Broenneke and Johanna Reichert came to Milwaukee to enter the Salvatorian Community. They attended Holy Angels Academy for two years as high school students. Because there was no Novitiate established yet in the United States, they were sent in June of 1903 to make their Novitiate in Tivoli, Italy. Sister Blanche made her first profession in Tivoli in 1904. She then returned to the United States.

Sister Blanche spent the greater part of her life serving in education. She taught in our schools at Bloomer, Dickeyville, Schoolhill, East Bristol and Edson all in Wisconsin and also in Lakeville, Minnesota. In many of these schools she was also assigned to be the Superior of the Community.



Elizabeth Kinzer on the left and Katherine Broenneke on the right - Candidates

Sister Blanche served as Provincial of the North American Province from 1929-1935. She was now to be called Mother Blanche. On October 29, 1929, the stock market crashed, thus ushering in the Depression Years. The Sisters worked very hard during these years because money was not available to pay lay nurses, aides etc. The retired Sisters at the Provincial House served soup and bread to hundreds of men who came daily for food. At the height of the Depression in 1933, our archives show that over 6,200 meals were served to poor men whom the Sisters affectionately called "Uncles." This practice continued at St. Mary's into the early 1960's.

Mother Blanche never aspired to any position of authority in our Province. Her temperament was more reserved. Becoming a Provincial of a growing Province called forth reserves of strength she didn't know she had. She was 43 years old when she was appointed and in her first general letter to the Sisters she wrote, "By the will of God, I am placed before you as "Mother" but I will still remain your "Sister." I, for my part, am interested in every single one of you and I am ready to do anything and everything for you, but please do not expect anything of me I can't do."

During her time as Provincial, she dealt with the old convent and farm at St. Nazianz, the renovation of St. Savior's Annex in Portage, sending Sisters to Sisseton, South Dakota and responding to many requests that were coming from Bishops all over the country for teachers and nurses. Being an educator, the continued education of the Sisters was always on Mother Blanche's mind. In 1931, she invited the University of Wisconsin-Madison to accredit Divine Savior High School at 35<sup>th</sup> and Center.



From 1954 to 1962, Sister Blanche did accounting at St. Mary's Hospital, Columbus, Wisconsin. In October of 1968, Sister Blanche traveled to Rome to attend the Beatification of Blessed Mary of the Apostles. Sister Blanche was one of the three Sisters present who had the opportunity to know and live with Blessed Mary of the Apostles. This was a huge honor for her.

In 1962, Sister Blanche retired to St. Mary's Convent, St. Nazianz where she helped with the preparation of the mailing lists for the host baking apostolate. In 1969, due to ill health, Sister Blanche returned to St. Mary's Hospital in Columbus where she died on March 30, 1970. Sister Blanche had a niece in the Congregation, Sister Ferdinelle Kinzer.

*(Notes taken from the Archives and Bending In Season)*